

West Hollywood-Fairfax Academy Middle School Overview

WHFA Project Overview

It is proposed that the Board of Education approves the establishment of West Hollywood Fairfax Academy Middle School (WHFA), on the site of Fairfax High School. The school would open in the Fall of 2020 and serve grade level 6, grade levels 6 and 7 in school year 2021-2022, and grade levels 6, 7, and 8 in 2022-2023 and thereafter.

The intent behind the development of a new West Hollywood-Fairfax community school is to add an innovative and distinctly different school model to the Middle School options that are currently offered by the Los Angeles Unified School District. This school will offer a unique approach based on the development needs of students in their middle school years: an intentionally diverse, equitable, and inclusive school that uses experiential collaborative learning and social-emotional development to move students toward mastery of the academic core and the “21st century survival skills” they will need to thrive in middle school and beyond.

Throughout the school design process, the families and school leaders from West Hollywood-Fairfax area elementary schools were asked for their input on the key design elements that were most important to them.

This project also took into account other examples of the 6-12 pathway model that the Board has approved to attract and retain students, including Reseda High, International Studies Learning Center, GALA, BALA, and University Pathways Public Service Academy on the campus of Drew Middle School.

WHFA Project Goals

- Increase LAUSD family and student retention by annually recapturing 125 families into the West Hollywood-Fairfax feeder pattern, fully enrolling WHFA and over time increasing the enrollment pathway to Fairfax High School
- Add another dynamic middle school option for families

Increasing District Enrollment: Matriculation Data

- Over 300 students are currently leaving the West Hollywood/Fairfax community district elementary schools for middle school, and many do not return for high school.
- In 2018, 359 students graduated from one of the 6 designated feeder schools.
- Of those, only 16% (58 students) matriculate to one of the four West Hollywood/Fairfax feeder schools (Laurel, Bancroft, Burroughs, LeConte), ranging from 1% (Wonderland) to 46% (Cheremoya, after 6th grade).

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2018 WEST HOLLYWOOD/FAIRFAX STUDENT MATRICULATION DATA							
School Name	TOTAL Across 6 Schools	Wonderland	West Hollywood	Rosewood	Melrose	Gardner	Cheremoya
Total Culminating 5th Grade	359	106	54	38	83	52	26
TOTAL Matriculating in-District	277	72	30	27	77	48	23
% Matriculating in-District	77%	68%	56%	71%	93%	92%	88%
TOTAL Matriculating to 4 Feeder MS	58	1	3	9	19	14	12
% Matriculating to 4 Feeder MS	16%	1%	6%	24%	23%	27%	46%

Proposed School Location

The proposed school location is a separate building on the Fairfax campus that is currently occupied primarily by the Fairfax Police Academy Magnet and the CTC (a career transition program for 18-22 year-olds with special needs). The magnet program will remain intact and be relocated to other classrooms on the Fairfax campus. The CTC would be relocated in its entirety to another campus equal to or better than their current facility. In the proposed campus sharing:

- The middle school schedule will be staggered in order to minimize interaction or schedule conflicts between the MS and HS programs.
- The middle school will have a separate drop-off, pick-up, and entrance from the high school.
- Campus amenities (athletic and other) will be shared with priority given to the high school in the case of competing needs.

FAQs

Why Fairfax rather than another location?

- The intent is to provide an enrollment pathway that leads to Fairfax High as they, like other schools in the district, have experienced declining enrollment in recent years. Fairfax has more space and available facilities than other sites.

Will this be a district, charter, magnet, or other school model?

- WHFA will be a district school, operating within the LAUSD labor agreements and district policies. There are no plans to create a charter school on the Fairfax campus.

Will Fairfax magnet programs be impacted?

- The Police Academy classrooms will remain on the Fairfax campus, but will move to a different location on the campus.
- There will be no impact to the Visual Arts magnet.

How were the six feeder elementary schools identified?

- The 6 six schools were identified based on the rates of attrition after 5th grade.

Why wasn't Laurel Span or Hancock Park Elementary included in the Group 1 enrollment preferences?

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- Hancock Park Elementary already has a strong matriculation rate into district middle schools, such as Burroughs, their feeder middle school.
- Laurel Span already offers a community middle school option to its families.

Why start a new school rather than invest in existing Middle Schools?

- We don't see this as an either-or proposition. Our goal is to continuously improve all schools, while also exploring additional options to attract and retain families. This new school, like all schools, will be funded based on the enrollment it generates.

Who will lead this new school?

- Once the school is approved, Local District West will lead a collaborative principal selection process with community engagement and input from all stakeholders.